MEDITATIONS

Cardinal Juan de Torquemada, O.P.

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Cardinal Juan de Torquemada

Meditations of the Most Reverend Father,
Lord Johannes de Torquemada,
Cardinal of the Holy Roman Church

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Wondrous and praiseworthy is the grace of Your dispensation, O most almighty Lord God. For since in Your nature You could not be seen by man, You created a work by which, making man a participant in knowledge of You, You — incomparable and immense — might appear intelligible. For Your invisible things are understood by the mind through the things that have been made. Your invisible things, namely: Power, Wisdom, and Goodness. From these three all things proceed; in these three all things consist; and by these three all things are governed. Power creates; Wisdom governs; Goodness preserves. And yet these three, just as in You, the true God, they are ineffably one, so also in operation they cannot be separated. Power through Goodness creates wisely. Wisdom through Power governs benignly. Goodness through Wisdom preserves powerfully. The immensity of creation manifests Power; beauty manifests Wisdom; utility manifests Goodness. O how sweet and pleasant it is to meditate frequently on these creatures and on the works of Your majesty: reason is instructed by it; the senses are delighted by its sweetness; affection is stirred by contemplation — so that with the Philosophers, admiring, we cry out: How great are Your works, O Lord! You made all things in wisdom; and I will meditate and sing of Your creation, and I will exult in the works of Your hands. Indeed this whole sensible world is like a certain book written by Your finger, and individual creatures are like certain figures — established not by human choice but by the arbitration of Your divinity, to manifest and signify in some manner Your invisible wisdom. It is good,

therefore, O faithful soul, to contemplate and admire continually the works of divinity — but only if you know how to convert the beauty of bodily things into spiritual uses. Consider the grievous sons of bitterness and indignation and eternal lamentation. But you, father Adam, who for wisdom and dignity, with which your Creator had endowed you more splendidly, ought to have been a firmer observer of the law — what have you done to us? You have provoked the law of heaven and behold you have destined all of us to the shadows of death. Who now, O faithful soul, in good meditation on evil things, is so insensible and so wholly destitute of the affection of piety, that he would not be moved to weeping, would not be stirred to tears, over this calamity of the human race? Who will give water to my head — as the prophet Jeremiah, sanctified in the womb, cried out — and a fountain of tears to my eyes, that I may weep day and night for the slain of my people?

O WONDROUS THING, FULL OF ALL PIETY.
Behold, for the reconciliation of mankind and the peace to be made between the offended omnipotent God and guilty man the inscrutable height of the divine counsel established the marriage to be contracted between the Son of God and human nature by a wondrous dispensation. This is comparable to a king of heaven who made a wedding feast for his son — which the heavenly Father made for His Son when, at the consent of the Virgin, human nature was united to Him in her womb — as St. Gregory says. And since consent makes marriage, a messenger is sent from the Father of lights, the Father of mercy, namely the angel Gabriel, to the Virgin named Mary, who was adorned with gems of virtue and elevated by divine gifts, incomparable among all creatures, so that

the person most fitted to give consent to the saving divine disposition in the name of the whole of human nature should be found. O admirable embassy, worthy of veneration in every part, such that none similar to it has been seen before it, nor any like it to follow. What indeed is greater? What more sublime? What more profitable to the human race could be brought from heaven? Plainly nothing. For this nature could not contain it, reason does not grasp it, the human mind cannot comprehend it; heaven is astonished, earth is stupefied, all creatures marvel, even heavenly curiosity wonders — all this is announced through Gabriel and fulfilled through Christ. For with the angel announcing and the Holy Spirit coming, the Word in the womb, remaining with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the same coeternal and unchangeable essence, assumed flesh within the virginal womb — and being impassible and immortal, and eternal before the ages could exist, so that through the ineffable holy sacrament conceived and born inviolably, according to the truth of each nature, the same Virgin remained both handmaid and mother of God. Whoever, therefore, who glories in being called a Christian and is faithfully devoted, weigh with just judgment the grace of this reconciliation: to you, formerly cast out, to you excluded from paradise, to you in long exile dying, resolved to dust and ashes, when there was no longer any hope of living, through the Incarnation of the Word power was given — coming from afar you return to your creator, you recognize your parents, you are freed from the servant, from a stranger you are proved to be a son, so that you who were born corruptible may be reborn by the Spirit of

God and obtain by grace what you do not have by nature.

O ADMIRABLE COMMERCE: the creator of the human race, taking up a living body, deigned to be born of a virgin, and proceeding as man without seed, He has bestowed on us His divinity. Often indeed the divine goodness in many and various ways has benefited the human race and has graciously distributed its many gifts to past ages. But in the last times, surpassing all customary benevolence it surpassed [all bounds] when in Christ mercy to sinners, truth to the wandering, and life to the dead descended; and the eternal Word, equal to the begetter in unity of divinity, assumed our nature of humanity — so that God born of God, and also man born of man, might come to be. O birth untouched by corruption, lovable to the world, pleasing to men, of inestimable beneficence, and wonderful in its depth of mystery even to the holy angels, and in all these things admirable — with a singular excellence of novelty, such that none like it has been seen before it nor any following it — where the birth was without pain, without knowledge of corruption, not befouling but consecrating the virginal womb. Rightfully therefore the faithful soul ought to rejoice and exult on this day, because on it our Lord's Nativity was consecrated, the devil lost his power, and the world received salvation.

O GREAT SACRAMENT OF PIETY: The eternal Word, which God once spoke and will not repeat — the immense Word which the whole universe of heaven could

not contain. Concerning which: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and God was the Word." This Word, I say, abbreviated, God made upon the earth; and the same in the womb of a virgin, not knowing human flesh, returned reduced to the measure of an infant. But this today is said to have been made even more abbreviated: having received in circumcision the sign of flesh. Indeed that Word in its conception was diminished somewhat in form below the angels; but in circumcision receiving the form of a sinner — original sin in the law was decreed — it is diminished much more in form, receiving sinners. O the stupendous humility of Yours, good Jesus! You accept circumcision decreed in the law in the flesh — You who appeared in the flesh without any pollution of all corruption. And after eight days were completed, that He might be circumcised, the Evangelist says: His name was called Jesus — a name glorious and most worthy of all adoration and veneration — a name which is above every name, which the Lord of lords proclaimed. A name besides which there is no other under heaven by which we must be saved. O sweet name, O delectable name, O name that forgives sinners! Plainly this name gave sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, swiftness to the lame, speech to the mute, life to the dead; it drove from those possessed in body the power of demons of our nature. Rightly indeed in the circumcision this name "Jesus" was imposed on You, Lord; because even then by work it indicated that Jesus — the precious blood flowing in the first fruits of our redemption — was tasting the bitterness of the passion for our salvation. Attend therefore, O faithful soul, if Jesus is so worthy to be

honored by all, how much more worthy He is to be loved — He who for your sake took up such ignominy, and redeemed you with His precious blood.

RECOGNIZE, O, FAITHFUL SOUL, that since the faith of the Nativity of Jesus Christ our Lord pertained to the salvation of all men, it was most fitting that the temporal birth of Christ itself be declared to the whole world. For although He had chosen one family of the Israelite people — and of that family one person from whom He would assume human nature — yet He did not wish His rising to be hidden within the narrow confines of a maternal dwelling place; but He wished to be recognized by all, He who deigned to be born for all. Therefore to the Magi from the region of the eastern peoples a new star of brilliance appeared first — which

more brilliant and brighter than the others easily turned toward itself the eyes of those looking and the minds of the more alert — so that they might immediately realize it was not idle that such an unusual thing was seen. He gave therefore to those beholding understanding who bestowed the sign, and what He did made intelligible, He caused to be inquired into, He enabled it to be found by those seeking it. The Magi therefore consuming their desire and coming to the child Lord Jesus Christ preceded by the same star, arrived. They adore in the flesh the Word in infancy, in weakness virtue, in the reality of man the majesty of God. O how stupendous the dignity between the most capacious womb of the mother enclosing Him who contains heaven and earth together. In the bosom of a mother He lies hidden who exceeds the kingdom of the Father; through the simple spiritual office it is revealed as sacred, humanity is seen and divinity is adored. They offered Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh — more mysteriously than in their consciences offering them. In the gift of Gold, royal dignity; in the Frankincense, divine majesty by vapor; and in the Myrrh, the humanity of the one to be buried is demonstrated. By your example therefore, O faithful soul, offer to the Lord gold of faith, the holocaust of piety, the aromatic myrrh of chastity, so that He may guard you unharmed from all corruption of sin.

THE STUPENDOUS HUMILITY OF OUR SAVIOR, which from the very beginning of the Incarnation initiated in unspeakable ways increases continually up to death. He showed Himself in the Nativity as poor; in the Circumcision He showed Himself more as poor and a sinner. But today much more showing Himself as poor sinner and servant. He is poor in that He chose for Himself the possessions of the poor of heaven as an offering to God. He is a sinner, indeed, insofar as likeness to it is concerned — He wished to be purified through oblations and He came to make purification of sins. But He is a servant in that He who had come to redeem the world wished literally to be redeemed. All these things the Son of God did not for His own sake, but for our sakes.

Both to fulfill the law lest He free us from the burden of the law, and as an example of humility. What an admirable example of humility! The most blessed mother, most devoutly following her singular privilege, did not refuse to be subjected to the law, though it was above the law for her: "You do not need," said blessed Bernard, "purification, nor is it your work — but, know your son, circumcision was your work. Be among women as one of them: for your son is in the number of boys." O immense humility of God and our Lord Jesus Christ and of His ever-blessed virgin mother — He himself who gave the laws was not disdained to be subjected to the decrees of the law; and He who was conceived without sin and all human concupiscence and was born was brought to be carried to the Temple of the Lord as polluted and unclean, and there with His immaculate mother He wished to be purified by the legal offering. Behold, O faithful soul, you have in Christ and in His glorious mother multiple incentives and examples of humility, the foundation of virtues. Why therefore do you swell, O man — dying carrion, where do you tend? O wounded one puffed up, why are you inflamed? Your prince is humble — and you, the proud one — the humble head and the proud member. Away with this!

JOSEPH, WHAT ARE YOU DOING? The thing you are doing suspends me with the most profound admiration. Herod, fearing lest the boy be lost, flees into Egypt with the boy and his mother. O stupendous thing! Is not this boy the one who a few days ago was born to us, whose sovereignty is on his shoulder, as the Prophet says: a holy God, a father of the future age, the prince of peace? In truth you judge the power of Herod to be such that he should fear lest the boy be lost: He is of infinite and insuperable power and majesty. O You, omnipotent and most merciful Father — what necessity was it that Your only-begotten should flee thus? Could You not preserve Him unharmed from the fury of Herod by Your power, You who have innumerable legions of angels at Your

command? Hear, O faithful soul, and if this seems to you wonderful: because the judgments of God are an inscrutable abyss, yet not without reason from God. For what Joseph fled into Egypt with the boy and his mother is not because of the impotence of the little one who is of insuperable power — but it was done by provident dispensation. First indeed: because the little one had to observe the rule of human nature which He had assumed, also in this respect. And it is common to human nature in children to flee monstrous power. Second, that He might offer to us an example of humility: it was deeply and truly humble not to wish to give occasion to evil — but to give place to the fury of the persecutor — which in one moment could destroy and annihilate him; and third, by divine counsel, in the disposition of divine patience, it is preeminently an example of patience. Is it not a singular example of patience to allow the most innocent to be excluded from his own homeland and relegated to an unknown province? Fourth, He who is that boy was worthy to act so that the necessities of persecutions instilling an example of fleeing might leave to other Christians. For it would seem reprehensible to the saints if they fled and that same master of theirs had not first fled. For He showed it first by example, then taught it by words. He said: "If they persecute you in one city, flee into another." That He fled into Egypt should not be suspected as separated from reason: because this was done by divine dispensation for a threefold reason. First, because this was long beforehand predicted by Isaiah saying: "Behold the Lord will ascend upon a light cloud and will enter into Egypt." A light cloud He calls the flesh of the Lord itself:

which is therefore called a light cloud because it was weighed down by no sin. Second, because in Egypt patriarchs and prophets had sojourned: therefore He who is God and the greatest patriarch wished to sojourn there. Whence that is fulfilled: "Out of Egypt I called my son," as the Evangelist says. Third, He fled into Egypt in the figure that His preachers, the holy Apostles, were about to leave Judea because of the unbelief and persecution of the Jews and transfer themselves to Egypt and the Gentile nations. For Egypt is interpreted as darkness: therefore by Egypt the Gentile people who were oppressed by the darkness of infidelity and sins are rightly understood. Whence that of the prophet Isaiah is fulfilled: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; and to those dwelling in the region of death, light has arisen for them." Therefore, O faithful soul, think and reflect on the labors and dangers which in this journey Christ Himself endured most harshly. Plainly if you consider the harshness of the road, the length of the journey, the tenderness of infancy, the ancientness of Joseph the father, the poverty at the needed expenses, the unknown region to which they transferred themselves — where they could hope for no solace of relatives or friends — you will find assuredly the greatest matter of compassion. Remember therefore the word of the Apostle, who speaking of the compassion of Christ for reward says in Romans 8: "The heirs of Christ if indeed we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified together."

O STUPENDOUS DISPOSITION OF DIVINE WISDOM. Behold, He who is the fount of wisdom, the Word of God in the highest — who teaches the angels in heaven and illumines all human minds in the world — at age twelve sits in the temple in the midst of doctors, listening and questioning them. What wisdom or science could it have heard that He had not known from eternity, in whom are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge of God? What does He ask about the law, He who is its author as it were and legislator, and whom God the Father has given as guide and teacher and precept to His peoples — which before from eternity in the font of divinity had not been seen? Recognize, O faithful soul, that the works

of Christ are full of sacraments, rich in mysteries, and rightly stupendous to human senses. You should not wonder if your intellect does not comprehend them... But I wish you to know this: that the divine wisdom, for the cause of human salvation, came through the mystery of the Incarnation to men — nothing was done that does not have relation to the cause of our salvation or teaching. And hence that at age twelve in the temple He sat in the midst of doctors listening and questioning them — He did it not by provident disposition to learn what He did not know: but that, questioned, He might teach. For from one source indeed springs both asking and answering. Then, that from their responses He might show the blindness around the understanding of the divine law and strike the perfidy of their arguments with His wonderful wisdom. Furthermore what He did in the temple — what a place of teaching — sitting in the midst of doctors listening and questioning them does not lack mystery: because the chief thing in this humility He gave us an example. For God's power and God's eternal wisdom — a divinity, as He says: "Wisdom herself dwells in counsel" — deigning to come to men as a man in human form, though gifted with the highest intelligence, sought, as was necessary, the form of learning the word, lest if the disciples of truth refused to be taught, they be counted as disciples of error. Therefore care, O faithful soul, in your studious exercises to imitate the form of humility of your Savior. Both because through the steps of humility one ascends to the summit of heaven, and God most high is not reached except by humility, and because God bestows grace on the humble and the sublime, and to the little

ones through humility the hidden things of divinity concealed from the proud He reveals with His kindness

DO NOT WONDER, O faithful soul, that the Son of God came from above to be baptized: because He did not do this because of some sin of His own — He who did not commit sin — but through the dispensation of God He did it to wash away in His flesh all of our sinful contagion, offending in many things as we do. He came certainly to be baptized in water, He Himself, the creator of water — so that He might show to us who were conceived in iniquity and born in sins the second nativity to be undertaken through water and the spirit and the mystery of divine regeneration. He deigned to be washed in the waters of the Jordan: so that He might indicate that our

sins were to be washed away by all flowing streams. O admirable Baptism of Christ, where in it the one immersed does not pollute the water with filth but with blessings honors it. O admirable Baptism of the Savior in which the streams purify rather than are purified by the flowing water. A new kind of sanctification truly — Christ does not so much wash as He is washed. For from the moment the Savior immersed Himself in the water, from that point all veins of all rivers in the mystery of Baptism were consecrated: so that whoever wished to be baptized in the name of the Lord, that world water does not dilute so much as the water of Christ purifies and all the veins of all fountains He consecrated in the mystery of baptism: so that whoever wished to be baptized in the name of the Lord, that worldly water does not dilute so much as the wave of Christ purifies. Therefore the Savior wished to be baptized — not to acquire merit for Himself — but to cleanse our filth for us. Moreover, O faithful soul, note that Christ being baptized: the Holy Spirit descended over Him and he heard the voice of the Father proclaiming Him to be His Son; and the sky opened and he saw it split open — do not understand this as if before baptism He did not have all these things: but that through the sacrament of baptism He wished to show what they would receive. For the Trinity appeared in baptism so that everyone might know what to receive in baptism. Then the Holy Spirit, which purifies every sinner of sins, he receives through the adoption of grace becoming a son of God; and then for him the gate of the heavenly homeland opens and he is made a companion of the heavenly angels. Strive, therefore, O faithful soul, that the gate of the

heavenly homeland which has been opened to you by divine mysteries you do not close yourself by human pleasures.

O HOW STUPENDOUS ARE YOUR WORKS, O LORD! You fasted, good Jesus, forty days and forty nights — not because any necessity in You was compelling to conquer any vices — or to restrain the rebellious spirit of the flesh with the roughness of fasting: because in You the Holy of holies these things have no place nor can they be — but to macerate Your innocent flesh for us out of immense charity, and to offer to the faithful an example of fasting and to instruct how great and how well fasting serves as a shield against the devil. Then most sweet Jesus, after the celebrated fast — when in our infirmity You had received hunger from the devil You permitted Yourself to be tempted — for that cause of piety, so that You might

instruct us how the devil's temptations which especially assail holy men are customarily carried on — and that by Your example and teaching we might overcome them. For in all this is the matter of our salvation. You indeed spoke to us about our hunger — we overcome in You: because we are the cause of Your fighting. For who would doubt that the only-begotten of the Father, whom no creature could resist, entered into battle for us? Now therefore, O faithful souls, as we recount the victories of the Lord's fasting we shall sanctify our fasts with religious observances. But what else is it to sanctify a fast than to wish for holy causes for fasting, to do just deeds, and to avoid iniquity?

O GOOD JESUS, HOW MUCH WAS IT the providence of Your disposition toward Your beloved bride the holy Church! For when for her edification You were about to assign as pontiff for future good the apostles and their successors as evangelical ministers and administrators of Your divine sacraments and of the ministries of divine things, You graciously bestowed on them an admirable power: by which men's sins might be loosed and the gate of the heavenly kingdom might be opened to believers; which by a certain metaphorical manner of speaking is named the keys of heaven. And so

that the unity of the Church might always remain unshaken, the predicted power You distributed by Your wisdom among the apostles so that You placed it principally in one of them: namely Peter — who in that celestial school of disciples was the most distinguished and first. As Matthew 16 says, the Lord questioning His disciples whom they said He was, with Peter answering as the mouth and head of them all, and Christ said: "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church: and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it: and to you I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." O inestimable and immense power — as Augustine says — a man placed on earth holds heaven: behold now at the nod of Peter divine keys of heaven are open. For he received from Christ the keys of the kingdom of heaven to open for believers bound with the chains of sin. O how nearby and near a remedy, how close the kingdom of God is, if one hastens to Peter — and not here by machine he seeks to reach the clouds: for the assent of faith alone prepares the way. Nor is it a long way to the Lord for those seeking it: because Christ Himself for believers was made the way. He placed in His stead in the age the keeper of the keys of the heavenly kingdom Peter, lest anyone consider the ascension to heaven difficult; and as Bernard says: Peter the key-bearer of the kingdom, tongue of faith, foundation of good, and glorious dignity: a man placed on earth commanding in heaven and exercising the power of angelic choirs. Peter is present and at his will the whole world is bound and loosed: and the

sentence of Peter precedes the sentence of the Redeemer — because it is not what Christ binds that Peter binds, but what Peter binds Christ Himself attests in His own words: "Whatever you bind etc." O powerful dignity and dignity worthy of power: Peter will judge and the omnipotent judgments of Peter confirm and are in the hand of Peter the hand of the most high. And since alone he is made familiar with Christ, who has had the familiarity of Peter — as Bernard says — strive devoutly to have the most blessed Peter the apostle as an advocate, so that He as a good doorkeeper may open the kingdom of heaven to you.

Peter as the mouth of them all answered and Christ deserved to hear from Christ: "You are the son of the living God." He deserved to hear from Christ: "You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church: and to you I will give the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." O inestimable and immense power — as Augustine says — a man placed on earth holds heaven: behold now at the nod of Peter divine keys of the celestial kingdom are open. For he received from Christ the keys of the kingdom of heaven in order to open for believers bound with the chains of sins. O how nearby and near a remedy — how close the kingdom of God is if one hastens to Peter. Not by machine here he seeks to reach the clouds: for the assent of faith alone prepares the way — and it is not a long way to the Lord for those seeking it: because Christ Himself for believers was made the way. He

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RECOGNIZE, O FAITHFUL SOUL, the pious dispensation by which our Savior wished to manifest the glory of His clarity to His disciples in three principal ways. First because the exhortation of the Savior often insisted on this: that those willing to follow Him — lest they should deem to themselves the loss of the lightest temporal things for hope of the eternal — so that at last he who would make his own soul safe would not fear to lose it for Christ. That therefore this happy constancy of fortitude the whole apostolic heart might conceive — and nothing of the harshness of the cross to be undertaken

would alarm — nor concerning the punishment of Christ would they be ashamed, nor would they believe the patience of suffering shameful to them — as the severity of the passion was about to come upon them — and lest they not admit the glory of power — He took Peter and James and John the brother of his other disciples more distinguished, and ascending with them to a high mountain. He manifested the glory of His clarity. He appeared therefore before chosen witnesses glorifying His own and communal glory; His face was bright as the sun and His garment as bright as snow and equal in whiteness. In which transfiguration that was principally being addressed: that the scandal of the cross might be removed from the hearts of the apostles, nor might the voluntary humanity of the passion shake their faith. The concealed excellence of dignity was to be revealed through the humanity revealed — and through these all things that were shown the hidden excellence of dignity was to be revealed. Second also by this wondrous providence this was done: because through this the hope of the holy church was to be founded most strongly — that the total body of Christ might know what quality of transformation it was to be given in exchange for the sharing of His goods who had preeminent shining on the head. Concerning which that same Lord had said that when the majesty of His coming was spoken of: "Then the just will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their father." Third so that the disciples of such a great glory, incited by the revelation, might more easily despise worldly things and more ardently sigh for eternal desires. Moreover there appeared with the Lord those speaking — Moses the

greatest legislator and Elijah the greatest imitator of divine good — so that in the preaching of the Old and New Testament meeting the instruments of ancient protestations concur with evangelical teaching. Run therefore, O faithful soul, with the most ardent desire to those supernal joys of happiness which by so many celestial mysteries have already been shown to you, and confirmed by divine testimonies — saying with the Prophet: "As the hart pants for the fountains of water, so my soul pants for You, O God."

O ADMIRABLE AND IMITABLE EXAMPLE OF HUMILITY OF YOU, O LORD JESUS: It is a great humility that man washes feet equal to man — greater than the angels of men — greatest of all that God washes the feet of men. And yet it is most superlative that You, good Jesus, kneeling prostrate with Your most holy hands wipe the feet of him, whose hands in Your tradition were noted to be defiled. Look then, O faithful soul, upon the Lord of the whole of creation — the fearsome judge of the living and dead — bending before the feet of a man, a betrayer and traitor with knees bent. Learn that He is

meek and humble of heart, and be confounded in your pride and blush at your impatience.

O WONDROUSLY ASTONISHING AND ALL FULL OF WISDOM, that You good Jesus, as You were about to depart to the Father — as love grew by increments of time — wishing to show the increments of Your affection — preparing therefore to go to the Father when the time of Your passion was at hand — You celebrated with Your apostles with wondrous charity, the legal feast completed and their feet washed, making memory of Your wondrous mercies, and the sacrament of Your body and blood with the greatest charity You consecrated and left it to be frequently celebrated in mystery through what was once offered, so that memory of so great a benefit might

persevere in us — Your body in food and Your blood in drink You left under the form of bread and wine to be received by the faithful. O greatness of clemency! O unheard-of love! Well spoke the Evangelist John of You, that having loved Your own who were in the world, You loved them to the end — that is to the greatest excess of love — pouring out Your whole self into their common love. The body in food and blood in drink and the soul in the price of the divinity in the fullness of blessedness. In which attend, O faithful soul, the inestimable sacrament of divine piety: The eternal wisdom resolved to manifest itself through visible things — as the manner of bread is refreshment and restoration for the angels through its immediate divinity, so for men in this mortality wandering by means of the assumed humanity the sacraments. Therefore it assumed flesh and proposed it to the faithful in food — so that through food of the flesh one might enter into the taste of the divinity. O grace of ineffable piety! Behold, that man the creator of angels might eat the bread of angels — He was made man; and passing whole and entire, He gives Himself to men for the remedy of health; and He who is the food of angels is made our medicine. Furthermore recognize, O faithful soul, that the divine wisdom prudently — so that human infirmity might be assisted in the assumption of the body and blood of Christ — both it veiled the customary and principal food with its form and thus proposed it to be received, so that feeling in the one might be nurtured and faith in the other built up. For feeling is nurtured in the one when the usual and accustomed it perceives; faith is built in the other when in it what it sees it recognizes as

what it does not see. The species of bread and wine is proposed — so that it may teach that the full and perfect refreshment is in the assumption of the body and blood of Christ — as He Himself testifies saying: "My flesh is truly food and My blood is truly drink." O precious and admirable feast! What indeed can this banquet be more precious than? It is greater than in which not meats of calves and stags as in the law of old — but Christ Himself is offered to us as true God. What is more wondrous about this sacrament — in it itself the bread and wine are substantially converted into the body and blood of Christ. What is more salutary in this sacrament by which vices are purged and virtues increased and the abundance of all merits is fattened. Rejoice, O faithful soul, and sweetly singing in the reception of this sacrament exclaim: "O sacred banquet in which Christ is received; the memory of His passion is recalled; the mind is filled with grace; and a pledge of future glory is given to us."

WHO WOULD NOT MARVEL AND BE ASTONISHED, O GOOD JESUS, at how You, voluntarily, with the traitor of Your blood, with men armed with swords and clubs, coming to seek your soul — You came to meet them, allowing Yourself to be allotted not in the cause of defense — but so that human arrogance might recognize that nothing can prevail against You except as much as Your own guilt demanding permitted it. Approaching those coming, You addressed with the kiss of Your most holy and bloodied face, most cruelly the beast Judas — and not him as an adversary but in him where the deceit was found where malice

abounded You sweetly applied — and this was of Your benevolence, O Lord — so that You might show all those things which the corrupt heart of the wicked could mollify, if they were willing. And reminding him of the old friendship you said to him these words: "Friend, why have you come?" Let anyone hear how at that hour in that place with murderers throwing hands upon you and the innocent — and they bound Your hands most mildly almost as a lamb, they led You to the slaughter. But not even then did Your mercy cease to distill upon Your enemies in Your sweetness — for the ear of the wounded was healed and Your defender restrained from injury was defended from injury: as the majestic Savior not able to be hemmed in — which majesty neither miracle nor benefit could break. Consider also the additional shameful ignominy for the capture of the Christ which from friends and disciples — those who proclaimed it — moved because all the disciples abandoned Him and fled out of fear — dismissing Him like a thief to be led — where that of Job is fulfilled: "My familiar friends have departed from me and those who knew me have forgotten me." After which my persecutors have pursued me and my enemies have laid snares for me.

LET THE EYES OF YOUR FAITHFUL SOUL WEEP and your spirit be moved by the fire of compassion — considering how shamefully, roughly, and cruelly the Savior was led bound before Caiaphas and the elders of the Jews — how much the council of the malicious removed Him from His own people. That most honorable one whom the angels desire to look upon — who fills all the celestial ones with overflowing — whom all divine things praise — the detestable hands of the plebeians filled and polluted — defiling the sacred face with vile spittle — they struck Him with sacrilegious hands, they beat Him as the most contemptible servant — they buffeted Him treating Him with contempt — where it is fulfilled that of Isaiah: "We saw Him and there was no appearance in Him

nor beauty" because the iniquitous bruise of stripes had befouled His face. Who at last was led bound before Pilate on false testimony accused demanded as a guilty one to die on the cross — before whom stood Jesus with head bowed, face serene, word seldom, voice submissive, eyes cast down to the ground, ready for shameful treatment and for blows — whom at last Pilate, the Evangelist says, scourging condemned: and the soldiers wove a crown of thorns and placed it on His head and they put a purple garment on Him. Recognize, O faithful soul, how much you are worth and how much you owe — and while you look upon so great a dignity of your redemption, it indicates to you the shame of sin. Behold piety is scourged for the impious — wisdom is mocked for the fool — truth is denied for the liar — injustice is condemned for the iniquitous — cruelty is inflicted for the cruel.

I FAIL UTTERLY, O GOOD JESUS, in the contemplation of the immense charity which You demonstrated in Your death to the human race. For when the transgression had so defiled human nature and wounded it with a deadly wound, that there was no remedy of salvation, no hope at all, no way of wisdom — and the human race could not be freed from the captivity of the devil and from eternal death — unless medicine came to us from heaven. And when the divine piety ineffably could supply many things to repair the human race — it chose the most powerful way by which to destroy the work of the devil — not by the virtue of a creature's power — but by the reason of justice: because this contained more good for grace, more fitting for

wisdom, more becoming for glory, more comfortable for salvation. Hence You, good Jesus, to complete this salutary sacrament of human reparation, assumed in yourself a passable human nature — and enduring death in it You most sufficiently paid to God our Father the price of our redemption. Your passion, good Jesus, was our singular refuge and unique remedy — it succors those failing through deficient wisdom and justice. Most acceptably, O good Jesus, we receive the mode of this redemption which You chose to please God — most fitting for curing sickness — most efficacious for drawing the human race — most prudent for fighting against the enemies of the human race. O immense charity of God: God commends His charity towards us in this: that while we were enemies Christ died for us. O unmerited and thus proven love! O unexpected dignity! O stupendous sweetness of the King of glory for the most desperate wretch — indeed for the worm — who has crucified Himself. The just dies for the unjust and He Himself dies as the most just among enemies and the most just. Look, O faithful soul, with the mental eye at how much the remuneration is owed to the Lord patient — recalling the bloodied the slap of reproach, the blow of the staff immediately, the thorns of the cross extorted, the hanging of the gibbet, the bowing of the head with languid eyes, the piercing of hands and feet, the perforated side, filled with bitterness, the sour cup offered, the obsequiousness of the hyssop, the mockery of the crowd, the robberies from both sides, the ridiculous gesticulations, the famous title, the noble garments and divisions of vestments. What more vile supplication of death and most shameful ignominy? O

how hard and rough things have You suffered, good Jesus — harder words, harder blows, and the most harsh and durable torments of the cross. Therefore all the faithful adore You and those redeemed by Your passion and death from darkness to light, from death to life, from corruption to incorruption, from exile to homeland, from grief to joy, are called.

LET IT NOT PASS BY, O FAITHFUL SOUL, to contemplate and in contemplating to grieve with the glorious Virgin — whose soul the sword of His passion most bitterly pierced. Think how when her son was being led beaten, slapped in the face, crowned with thorns, and condemned — all her entrails were moved and her spirit failed, and she had no voice nor senses. Remember, moreover, O devout soul, how the herald crying out, Pilate commanding, her son carrying his cross to punishment, was made — and there was a concourse of people after him — some mocking deriding him, others throwing mud and dung and other filth on his head —

while his most sorrowful mother followed him with the women who had followed from Galilee, ministering to him — by whom as dead she was held and supported — until she finally came to the place where He was crucified before her. O with inexplicable grief seeing the Lord and her son hanging on the cross and dying the most shameful death. Whence the Evangelist: "There stood by the cross of Jesus His mother." Whence as Augustine weeping said: "Weeping I saw dying him whom my soul loves and wholly melting away from grief of pain I wept saying and repeating weeping: My son, my son, woe is me! Who will grant me that I might die for you? O wretched one what shall I do — my son dies — why does this most sorrowful mother not die with her son: my son, my son — sole love, sole son of mine — do not forsake me after you — let the one who brought you forth be destroyed with you — O death wretched do not spare me alone before all others — and gather the mother with her son — my son sole sweetness, singular joy of my life and my soul, all my consolation — see that dying you meet your mother. O son know.."

Pity the desolate mother and pity me and I beseech you if you receive me at the gibbet, so that those who live by one flesh may pass over by one death. O truly now you are my father, you are my mother, you are my spouse, you are my son, you are all my goods: I see you, poor widowed woman, desolate from spouse, desolate of all goods. O son, what shall I do — what shall I do to you — I do not know what I shall do — where shall I go, most sweet one — dearest one to me? And words of this sort full of many

sorrows are believed to have been uttered.

O BY YOUR DIGNITY'S GRACE, O GOOD JESUS: You were able by Your will alone to free those who were held captive in hell without descending there — but drawn by Your charity and that ineffable piety You deigned to descend there to those who were sitting in darkness and in the shadow of death for a long time and to suffuse them with Your light — as in Your birth You spread the light of Your clarity over those who were on earth. Then also to demonstrate Your power before the underworld. Whence John in the Apocalypse writes of You descending from heaven having the great key of the abyss in His hand: who seizing the ancient serpent who is

the devil and Satan, bound him for many years. Then so that with the ancient enemy of the human race already conquered by Your death and with the power of death now overcome — with the iron gates of hell shattered — their captives from the bonds of damnation You might free. Consider devoutly, O faithful soul, how Christ descended to the profound abysses of hell almost as a certain splendid conqueror — terrible and splendid — and the impious and trembling legions of tartarus were alarmed at Him and began to inquire: "Who is this so strong, so splendid, so illustrious, so terrible? Is this the one who has always been subject to our tribute of death? Who sent us never such a dead man among the dead — never such gifts destroyed what is for the underworld? Who therefore is this who intrepidly enters our borders — and not only is he not terrified by our punishments — but also frees others from our bonds." Then darkness itself — his own splendor putting it to flight — all prisons he broke open, captives he freed, those bound he loosed, mourning into joy he transformed. Note furthermore, O faithful soul, how after those infernal voices some little while before the coming of our Lord and Savior all chains were broken and all were freed — and behold suddenly innumerable crowds of peoples who were held captive in the death of the Savior throwing themselves with tearful supplication before His divine majesty said: "Have you come whom daily we hoped for?"

YOU HAVE COME whom the law and the prophets foretold. You have come mercifully granting even pardon to the sins of the world, freeing the captive dead below. You descended for our sake to the underworld — You did not desert us when You turned back to the heights — You placed the sign of victory in heaven, You place the sign of victory in hell. Consider finally, O faithful soul, how after those infernal laments, having heard, they rejoice — the Savior our Lord from the lowest depths crowned with triumph and with the joy of the blessed toga proceeds — as what the Prophet says seeing from afar: "Also you have freed your captives from the pit by the blood of your

covenant." By all therefore throughout the whole catholic world the Church exults: because Christ our Lord the king, truly the most powerful conqueror with His might, trampling the serpent underfoot, with the gates of hell broken, with the punishment of penitents.

DECOROUS INDEED, O GOOD JESUS, to rise from the dead glorious and immortal to your disciples — who entered with the greatest grief — and you brought them consolation — and the word also for divine commendation of justice: to which with those who had humbled themselves for God you came to exalt them. Most just it was that You who for charity were humbled even to death should come with a glorious resurrection to be exalted. It suited also to confirm our faith — which is most strengthened by Your resurrection. For good Jesus, if You had not risen from the dead, as the Apostle argues, vain would be our preaching and our faith would be empty. It suited also to raise our hope — because as our

head and leader rising You remove all doubt of the members of the body about to rise. Plainly therefore, Your resurrection, good Jesus, was our festival: because it brought us back to immortality, it was also the festival of the angels: because recalling us to celestial things it filled their number. O venerable solemnity by which Christ rose from the dead, by which the power of the devil fell, the bonds of hell were dissolved, the bond of ancient transgression was extinguished, and the sting of death was blunted — the hope of future resurrection for us is confirmed. If therefore you truly believe, O faithful soul, with Christ who rose — seek the things that are above, where Christ is at the right hand of God — seek the things above, not the things on earth — as Christ rose from the dead so also you walk in newness of life.

THE INEFFABLE AFFECTION OF HIS LOVE TOWARD HIS BELOVED BRIDE THE CHURCH OUR SAVIOR DEMONSTRATED: Since being about to withdraw His presence from the world — He visibly seemed to leave the Church desolate without a pastor and rector — He entrusted the care of all His sheep to one, namely the blessed Peter, who would hold the place of the whole lordly flock of all in His place. And so before His ascension to heaven He said to Peter: "Simon, son of John, do you love me more?" And Peter responding said: "Lord, You know that I love You." Christ answered him: "Feed my sheep." About which word Chrysostom speaks: Peter received from the Son above everything that is of the Son — not as Moses in one people — but in the whole universe the Lord saying "Feed my sheep" — between those sheep and these not distinguishing. And blessed Bernard in the book on Consideration addressed to Pope Eugenius says these things to the purpose: "You are he to whom the keys of the kingdom of heaven were entrusted; to whom the sheep were committed. There are indeed other heavenly doorkeepers and shepherds of flocks but you are the more glorious, as much as you have inherited differently before others. They have assigned flocks, one each to individuals — to you all are entrusted as one. Not only are you the shepherd of all sheep — but also the shepherd of all shepherds. Do you wish to prove this by the word of the Lord: 'If you love me' He says 'feed my sheep' — which sheep? The people of such and such a city or region or kingdom? 'My sheep' He says — To whom is it not clear that He designed all, not some? Nothing is excepted where nothing is distinguished." And blessed

Cyril says: "To the Roman Pontiff — who succeeds the most blessed Peter — all are by divine right subject — and the primates of the whole world bow as to the Lord Jesus Christ." Hence the faithful soul, it is necessary for salvation to be subject to the Roman Pontiff: nor can he be numbered among the sheep of Christ who says he is not under the guardianship of the Roman Pontiff.

IT WAS MOST FITTING, O GOOD JESUS, to rise from the dead to an immortal and incorruptible life and to ascend into heaven — because heaven is the incorruptible place and the mansion fitting for immortals — to gloriously exalt the assumed nature of humanity and to raise it so much higher than all other creatures than You were pleased to make it a participant in Your goodness. It suited also to perfect our faith concerning Your integrity — that it was said when everything in heaven, earth and sea and in the deep below had been tested — that You, Lord, are in glory and the right hand

of God. It suited moreover, O good Jesus, to ascend into heaven gloriously — so that introducing us into the possession of heaven which You had purchased with Your precious blood — You might lead us into heaven. O therefore we rightly rejoice on this day when not only are we the possessors of paradise — but also we have penetrated the higher heaven to be received by His own ineffable glory — which through the envy of the devil we had lost — because those whom the devil deprived of their original dwelling of happiness, the Son of God has incorporated them above all the orders of angels and placed them at the right hand of God the Father. Note moreover, O faithful soul, this in your contemplation — that powerfully and without any external support in the multitude of His strength — and the angels rejoice hastening in jubilant manner as He ascends. As He ascending the heavens marvel, the trumpets sound, and the pleasant melodies with pleasant modulations of choirs resound. Rejoice therefore, O faithful soul, with special joy and dignity of action of grace worthy of God — and with free eyes of the heart look upon that height to which Christ ascended and remains — erect after His steps of faith and love — ascend and strive to follow with all your virtue.

IT SUITED THE AMPLITUDE OF YOUR GLORY, O GOOD JESUS, that after the glorious triumph over the ancient enemy and after You had ascended, O Lord of virtues — and the magnificent glory of Your honor to show the donors and the broad diffusion of graces to Your faithful — And so it was most fitting to act that You lead captive captivities and give gifts to men. But what gifts of the spirit — namely the Holy Spirit such a gift — what You are. O great indeed is Your mercy, O Lord Jesus — giving the equal gift to You with it — You who today diffuse the Holy Spirit in the spirit of adoption upon the sons. Therefore Scripture speaks in the plural because many gifts are given to men — because with the Holy

Spirit many gifts are poured out. For the Holy Spirit descends from the throne of Your glory in the form of fire rapidly — with the splendor of truth coming — with the fervor of charity — with the sweetness of spiritual joy — with the beauty of virtue — with the treasury of grace — with the knowledge of all the sciences of languages. From this plane the tongues of the angelic preaching it sounded out: From this the river of charisms was channeled: the rain of benedictions, divine dew nourishing — universal ardor irrigating — because toward renewing the face of the earth the Spirit of God was carried over the waters — and to cast aside the old darkness, the new light of fulgent gifts was in contest. Indeed today your apostles — You infusing with fire of the Holy Spirit — as if they themselves afterward the whole world as twelve rays of the sun and twelve lamps of truth illuminating — and drunk anew of the wine filling — and drought of the sacred hearts of all the peoples irrigating. Prepare yourself therefore, O faithful soul, for such precious gifts of the Holy Spirit to be received — to which without doubt you are the more capable — the more you are freed from love of earthly things.

PLAINLY INESTIMABLE ARE THESE SWEET GENEROUS BENEFITS. Jesus in the most mild Eucharistic sacrament and also the exhibited with incredible gifts — worthy to be offered with dignity and fittingly and as the sacred observance most devoutly to celebrate — the institution of a solemnity to be recalled — especially so that such singular salutary benefit deserved duly to give thanks to the almighty God — noting that this sacrament was instituted around the time of the Lord's Supper on account of the religious occupation of the Passion offices it could not at that time be celebrated with this solemnity. Therefore on this day on which the faithful soul can with as much joy as is possible, as much

as it is joyful, let it be sonorous, let it be the decoration of the mental jubilation. The day of solemnity is celebrated in which such a sacrament of the glorious body is recollected in the institution. Praise therefore, O faithful soul, of the glorious body the mystery of the precious one whom in the world as the price of the fruit of the womb He generously shed for the nations.

ATTEND RIGHTLY, O FAITHFUL SOUL, although the summe and increate Trinity of the Father and Son and Holy Spirit may be an ineffable and incomprehensible sacrament. Hence the Holy Prophet speaking of the generation of the Son says: "His generation who shall declare?" By divine providence this has been so salutarily arranged — and many things have been given to you — by which you may be led to some knowledge of that sublime holy Trinity. The first is the very universality of creatures: in which the vestige of the holy Trinity clearly shines. For one, three, and art — and order are in these things the

vestige of the Trinity shines. For in each individual creature there is something one and it is formed by a certain species and it maintains a certain order. And so in individual creatures the vestige of the Trinity shines: in which the supreme origin of all things is, and the most perfect beauty and the most blessed delight.

The supreme origin moreover is understood as God the Father — from whom all things are, and from whom is the Son and the Holy Spirit. Most perfect beauty is understood as the Son — most blessed delight is understood as the Holy Spirit. There occurs secondly the rational creature: which when it was formed to the likeness of the divinity without doubt is more fully led to know the excellences of the holy Trinity. Behold therefore that in rational creation the mind remembers itself, understands itself, and loves itself. And if we discern — we discern a Trinity — not God indeed — but the image of God — here is namely memory, intelligence, and love — which three are not three lives, but one life — one essence. The mind itself is a parent and its knowledge is as its offspring. For God when He knows Himself begets and sole is the parent of His knowledge. The third is love which proceeds from the mind itself and knowledge — which considering, the faithful soul stretches to the contemplation of the Creator and sees unity in trinity and trinity in unity — in which contemplation by divine illumination aided it comprehends — that in that holy Trinity truly is God the Father who essentially has begotten from Himself one sole Son — and one Son who essentially is from one Father — and the third Holy Spirit

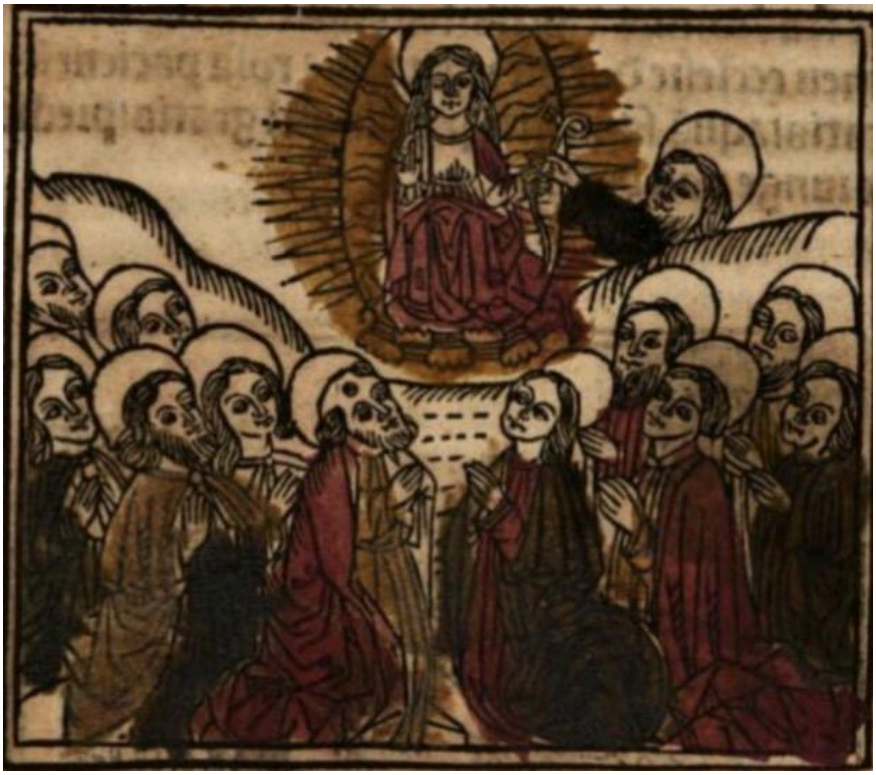
who essentially from Father and Son proceeds. Third to the knowledge of the holy Trinity we are led in divine scriptures through the expression of proper names. For divine Scripture says: "Three are they who give testimony in heaven: the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit — and these three are one" — and the three by whom we are led through figures of Scripture — as through the figure situated where God appeared in three young men and as one Abraham saw three and adored one. Plainly unless he had understood God there he would not have adored Him: because adoration belongs to God alone and not only one but many adore. Since therefore you see three as one you adore three in the figure, in the one in the Trinity you understood. Moreover since incomprehensible is the mystery of the holy Trinity — whose glory the eye of the mind is repelled by — conquered by amplitude — overwhelmed by immensity — confused by capacity — do not, O faithful soul, wish to scrutinize the glory of such great majesty. For as the wise Solomon says: "The scrutinizer of majesty will be overwhelmed by glory." Therefore when you inquire about it, it is perverted curiosity — but to hold as the mother church holds faith and security — believe and hold firmly with holy mother church the holy Trinity — the same Father and Son and Holy Spirit — one substance, one essence, one power, one creator and rector of all creatures — from whom are all things — through whom are all things — in whom are all things — to Himself glory forever.

ST. DOMINICUS: A happy vine whose stock produces such great fruit for the age, making vital wine flourish for the people from the abundance of the palms of the world — and already encircling the whole world. Well is the glorious patriarch Dominicus called a vine. Both because by the celestial farmer he was planted in the vineyard of the Church in the wondrous providence for the salvation of men, as an illustrious example of all holiness, breathing out the most fragrant flowers and spreading out the most sweet fruits in copious abundance. And because he founded the most illustrious order of preachers — who with the admirable fragrance of holy preaching put to

flight the serpents from the vineyard of the Lord — namely the heretics — and with the irrefragable splendor of doctrine drove away various errors and heresies manfully and confuted them. Hence the Church sings in its solemnity a hymn: "The new joy of the sweet fruit from our chorus today, good Dominicus, the chorus proclaims." He is the one who from a small spring grows into a great stream — who already wondrously gives the best drink to the world. O man ineffable and the singular mirror of all holiness — of whose vine abundance so many distinguished by holiness, so many illustrious by dignity — so many illustrious by religion — some already enrolled in the catalogue of the saints — others most learned in every kind of doctrines — who have poured the sacred water of wisdom on the Church — and refresh and make it fruitful by the variety of doctrines. This most holy father therefore, confessor and at the same time preacher, most excellent guide and head — glorious in life and doctrines and miracles — most acceptable to God and advocate.

We strive to have singing with the Church and saying: O light of the Church doctor of truth, rose of patience, ivory of chastity — water of wisdom you offered freely — preacher of grace, join us to the blessed. Glorious and wonderful in the holy Sixthus did he appear — O good Jesus — and in confession unshaken Your virtue and in passion a glorious victory You won. O pastor and at the same time the foundation of firmness of uprightness — diamond of constancy — Sixthus fount of clemency, stream of generosity — fighting me in the battle under the

title of your holiness — after the course of the present life
join me with the blessed.



WE BELIEVE MOST ASSUREDLY, O LORD JESUS, that You who commanded to honor parents — have glorified Your most glorious mother in her assumption so completely in body and soul — that no mortal tongue can express it. For who can sufficiently think how wondrously the queen of the world has proceeded today — how much the affection of the legions of celestial hosts went to meet her coming — how many to the throne of glory were conducted — and what serenity of face, what serene face, what ample things of the Son receiving her and above every creature exalted. We glorify therefore the virgin whom today paradise received rejoicing — whom the

angels with their praises follow — whom the chorus of apostles venerates — whom martyrs candidly bless — whom the number of confessors of the saints celebrates — to whom the army of the holy virgins with their invincible palms triumphant goes to meet — because she is the one through whom all malediction was loosed and the celestial benediction came to the whole world. Cry out therefore, O faithful soul: O Mary, star of the sea, singular in dignity, placed in the highest summit of the universe — commend our offspring to Your care — so that with You we may rejoice in glory.

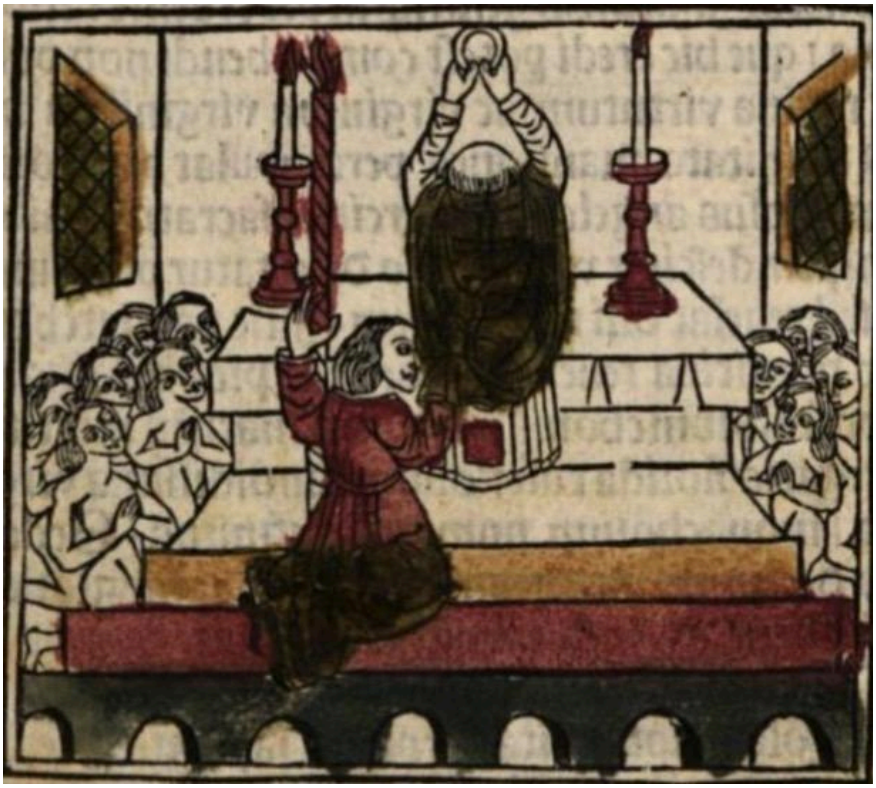
BY THE WISDOM OF GOOD JESUS in the multitude of the people the dignity of the king and in the smallness of the people the ignominy of the prince. Wondrous indeed and ineffable is the glory of Your splendor — attended by the hundreds of thousands of ministering and ten times a hundred thousand angels. Not a little more splendid moreover was the glory of Your highness to which the nobleness of those ministering is so clear by the sublimity of nature and excellence of perspicacity — by the glory of ministry than however beautifully disposing Your divine wisdom by a triple hierarchy, moving in nine

orders distinguished, are in admirable variety of offices distributed — their creator alone well knew them. But these most blessed celestial spirits to be honored and venerated the holy church has deservedly accepted. Both because the whole order of creating things the most diligent executors of divine providence are around the governance. And also principally because they are assigned by that care to the ministry of human salvation and most diligently solicit it with the highest charity procure it. All indeed, the Apostle Paul says, are ministering spirits sent in ministry on account of those who will receive the inheritance of salvation. Attend therefore, O faithful soul, with how much devotion of affection we are bound to render grateful actions of thanks with due praises to the holy angels — who show such great benefits of charity toward the human race.

O WONDROUS PLAINLY, O LORD JESUS, in Your feasts in which the greatest good is prepared for them — and so that it is not grasped by faith, not reached, not comprehended — desiderata and vows all things transcend — and can be acquired by love — and cannot be estimated nor can it be valued. For what tongue or what intellect can sufficiently describe how great the supernal joys of happiness prepared from eternity for Your saints are. Plainly neither eye has seen, nor ear has heard, nor has it ascended into the heart of man — how much clarity, how much sweetness and how much pleasantness is in that vision by which the saints see You face to face. O great God, what eyes they will be who see You — healthy

beyond healthy, beautiful beyond beautiful, strong beyond strong, bright beyond bright, serene beyond serene, blessed beyond blessed. O that most admirable spectacle of the celestial solemnity which does not come to an end yearly — but shines with continuous joys — where light is seen in the light of the Trinity itself — its substance opening before the blessed eye — and is recognized proceeding from the begetter and from eternity — the reasoning that can be believed here cannot be comprehended. With her the queen of virtues and of virgins with innumerable virgins walks through the angelic mansions. There the numerous army of the celestial divisions shines in sacred distributions — and by voluntary obsequy pleases it not revealing but revealing the majesty of the Lord. There the primeval and venerable society of patriarchs — the glorious chorus of apostles — the purple multitude of martyrs — the most resplendent gathering of confessors — the most bright troop of virgins — the infinite number of monks. The Lord of virtues sits in the midst — and of His fullness refreshed those looking upon Him they are inebriated. They are inebriated from the abundance of Your house. Blessed those who dwell in Your house, O Lord — there secure rest, pleasurable, life perpetual, wisdom of mind — agility of body — illumination of heart — as of all things the dwelling place of men is in the city of God. And in your streets the voice of exultation is sounded in sweet modulations. And it is justly and rightly decreed that on this holy day of all the saints the festival is to be celebrated — so that whatever human frailty through ignorance or negligence or through the occupation of a familiar matter has passed over less

fitly in the solemnities of the saints — in this holy observance may be resolved. O how venerable the solemnity of today in which all the saints are honored communally by us. O how glorious a change by which the temple dedicated to the cult of all the saints' idols is today consecrated. O therefore confident, O faithful soul, on this holy day — because you can indubitably hope to obtain what you seek — where before the divine majesty such thousands of thousands of intercessors have intervened for you.



HOLY INDEED AND PROCEEDING FROM THE FOUNT OF CHARITY — this ordinance which the holy mother church established — that a general commemoration of all faithful dead be made. Both so that by one common admonition we may be invited to meditation on death — especially since the sentence of Plato stands that all wisdom of life is meditation on death. We ought therefore also we ourselves to premeditate what we once were — and what we will be in the future — and what we wished or did not wish to be absent — no longer able. O how useful is the meditation on death: "Remember death and you will not sin forever" — he who

daily meditates on death despises the present and hastens toward the future. Let moreover this general commemoration of the dead be — so that those dead who cannot be assisted by special suffragic benefits may be helped by general suffrages — these benefits of suffrages profit not those for whom they are offered but those who while they lived merited that they might profit. There is no doubt, however, that the prayers of the holy mother church and the sacrifice of salvation and alms which are offered for their spirits may benefit those who lived before death — so that they possess what is useful after death. Attend therefore, O faithful soul, and holy and salutary is the thought to pray for the dead — so that they may be freed from sins. Strive therefore, O faithful soul, to have your dead continuously recommended with your prayers.

[FINIS]

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